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CATULLUS.

Tell me not what too well I know
About the Bard of Sirmio—
Yes, in Thalia's son
Such strains there are—as when a Grace
Sprinkles another's laughing face
With nectar, and runs on.

SUCH is Landor's characterization of the poetry of Catullus, and it is one of the indications of the existence in the field of criticism of men who have regarded Catullus not simply as the peer of Horace and Vergil but as their superior. No poetical position can be more lofty than the one assigned to him by Niebuhr, who asserts that he is the greatest poet Rome ever had; that "he had the same perfections as the Greek lyric poets down to Sophocles, and is fully their equal." Mommsen holds a similar view, for he says that the Latin nation has produced no second poet in whom the artistic substance and the artistic form appear in so symmetrical perfection as in Catullus. In 1835 Macaulay wrote: "No Latin writer is so Greek. The simplicity, the pathos, the perfect grace which I find in the Athenian models are all in Catullus, and in him alone of the Romans." Twenty-two years later he said: "He grows on me with intimacy. One thing he has—I do not know whether it belongs to him or to something in myself—but there are some chords in my mind which he touches as no one else does. The first lines of *Miser Catulle*, the lines to Cornificius, . . . and part of the poem beginning '*Siqua recordanti*' affect me more than I can explain. They always move me to tears." These are certainly high praises to be given to a Roman, and they assuredly were not influenced by any narrowness on the part of the critics.

But who was Catullus? The statement of Jerome is that he was born in the year 87 B.C., and died at Rome in 57, at the age of thirty. The latest event mentioned in the poems took place in 54 B.C., so that Jerome was mistaken as to the

date of his death. There is more probability that Jerome mistook the last of the consulships of Cinna in 84 B.C. for the first in 87 than that XXX. has taken the place of XXXIII. Not content with the solution of the question of greater probability, critics have brought forward for the year 84 B.C. several lines of argument, all indefinite and proving nothing. Ovid speaks of him in Elysium wreathing his youthful brows with ivy,

hedera iuvenalia cinctus
Tempora . . . docte Catulle (Am. 3, 9, 62-3),

though "youthful" is as fitting an epithet for the age of thirty-three as for thirty. Furthermore, he was intimate with men who were born about 82 B.C., and it is held that the birth of Catullus should be as near that date as possible. This might have some force if it were not for the fact that intimacies such as those of Catullus are dependent not so much on parity of ages as on similarity of tastes. Another line of argument is that the early poetry of Catullus, written in 61 or 62 B.C., seems more like that of a young man of twenty-three or twenty-four than of one of twenty-six or twenty-seven, especially when we remember that Catullus, by his own confession, entered at a precociously early age on his career of poesy and of love.

This statement involves the entire question of the age at which the powers of the poet became developed, and the answers given must be merely unverifiable inferences in cases where the actual data are not obtainable. The age element which may be felt in the poetry of any author depends largely on the constitution of the critic, and the consequent standard of criticism which he may set up. When Chatterton at the age of seventeen wrote poetry, which, for a time, deceived some of the most acute of the critics of England, they felt that his work was the product of a developed mind, because they thought such a mind was behind the poetry. At the age of twenty-one Pope finished his "Essay on Criticism," of which Taine says: "It is the kind of poem which a man might write at the end of his career, when he has handled all modes of

writing, and has grown gray in criticism; and in this subject, of which the treatment demands a whole literary life, he was at the first outset as ripe as Boileau."

A very good double illustration of the impossibility of assigning narrow time limits to the timeless operations of the human mind may be taken from Macaulay's "Essay on Bacon:" "One of the most remarkable circumstances in the history of Bacon's mind is the order in which its powers expanded themselves. With him the fruit came first and remained till the last; the blossoms did not appear till late. . . . In eloquence, in sweetness and variety of expression, and in richness of illustration his later writings are far superior to those of his youth. In this respect, the history of his mind bears some resemblance to the history of the mind of Burke. The treatise on the 'Sublime and Beautiful,' though written on a subject which the coldest metaphysician could hardly treat without occasionally being betrayed into florid writing, is the most unadorned of all Burke's works. It appeared when he was twenty-five or twenty-six. When at forty he wrote the 'Thoughts on the Causes of the Existing Discontents,' his reason and his judgment had reached their full maturity; but his eloquence was still in its splendid dawn. At fifty his rhetoric was quite as rich as good taste would permit, and when he died, at almost seventy, it had become ungraciously gorgeous. . . . It is strange that the 'Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful' and the 'Letter to a Noble Lord' should be the production of one man. But it is far more strange that the 'Essay' should have been the production of his youth and the 'Letter' of his old age." In these cases, as well as in others that might be mentioned, it is only the definite biographical data which enables the critic to trace the development of the writer's style. The data destroyed, criticism would be as much at sea as it is in the attempts to determine the relative date of the publication of the different works of Plato. The lines of argument as applied to Catullus we must hold as futile, and merely accept the greater probability in fixing a date where exactness is of no moment.

Whether born in 87 or in 84 B.C., the thirty years of his

life covered about one-third of the great revolutionary epoch in Roman history, marking the death of the old Roman institutions and the transference of the control of the State from a democracy to a monocracy. During the first years of his life, Sulla and, perhaps, Marius were the actors in that great contest testing the question of the strength of individuals working under the guise of the forms of the Roman constitution. The early years of his authorship were coeval with the rise of Cæsar and Cicero and with the conspiracy of Catiline; and when he died, in 54 B.C., Cæsar had fairly well within his grasp the forces with which was consummated the final act in the establishment of imperialism at Rome. Though born in a Roman province, at Verona, Catullus passed most of his life at Rome, surrounded by revolutionary influences, and with his name is associated the names of some of the most noted leaders of the State and society at that time. Cæsar he lampooned, entertained, and lampooned again. We have his thanks to Cicero for some unknown favor which had been rendered. He was intimate with Calvus, and with Cælius, the bright and witty correspondent of Cicero, by whom he was defended when accused of an attempt at poisoning by Clodia, the ill-famed sister of the infamous Clodius. Cicero in his defense shows us much of the unmoral amiability of Cælius, but he is of most interest to us as the successful rival and successor of Catullus in the affections of Lesbia.

The personality of Lesbia is, of all associated with Catullus, the most conspicuous. It is with her character that every account of Catullus must deal, and it is now well agreed that she was none other than Clodia herself. Rich, witty, voluptuous, the wife of the great, noble Metellus, her beauty was of the Junoesque type, and she had won the title bestowed on Juno herself. She was a prominent member of a society in which the virtues of the old Romans were not conspicuous. The picture of the ancient Roman matron was one well worthy of attention. Faithful and true, she was the coworker in that religious unit, which, with the husband as the head, maintained the unbroken worship of the spirits of the dead. But that stately procession of august matrons had passed by. In their

place had come a generation regardless of the past and careless of the future. Neither among the women nor among the men who were the associates of Catullus were the virtues of the past preserved. The Julian family preserved the tradition of a descent from the gods, but its greatest representative was religiously indifferent and denied the foundations of the ancient faith.

The wide religious gulf which had once separated the patricians and the plebeians had gradually closed as the patricians dropped their religious beliefs, which made them a distinct class and gave them especial privileges. Of these privileges, the members of the Claudian family were the haughtiest defenders; but sometime before the days of Catullus, the name of one branch of the family had been vulgarized to Clodius, and it was but another step when, in 58 B.C., one of them broke through an empty formalism and became by adoption a plebeian that he might thereby become a tribune of the plebs. Outwardly it was a thrust at Cicero; but it was merely one of the manifestations of the irrepressible conflict between the aristocracy and the democracy which was of momentous importance in determining the friendships of Catullus and in giving color to the portraiture of Lesbia which has come down to us.

Up to the year 62 B.C., Cicero seems to have been on good terms with Clodius, but they drew apart as the breach between the two political parties gradually widened, and finally there came the bitterest hatred. With all the prolific energy of his nature Cicero has drawn the picture of his enemy in the darkest colors, some of which, however, we must regard as due to the conventional coloring of party politics. As we read Cicero's account of the villainies of Catiline, we feel that Catiline is a being most to be loathed. Yet at a period not long preceding the delivery of the Catilinarian orations, Cicero had confided to Atticus that he had intentions of defending Catiline as an aid to his own political aspirations. How much of the lurid coloring is exact, we cannot tell. Whether the coarse doggerels of the soldiers in the triumphal procession of Cæsar, whether the refined ribaldry of Catullus, whether the portraiture by Cicero is all true to life—we may well doubt. When

we read the so-called "Invectives" of Cicero, and of Sallust, in which a rhetorician of a later age has represented each drawing the sin-daubed portrait of the other, we feel that the writer, whoever he may have been, had caught the spirit of the immoral political conventionalities of the age of Catullus.

The grossness of the personal descriptions is astounding, but at the same time they illustrate the truth of the words of Porson: "Among the ancients plain speaking was the fashion; nor was that ceremonious delicacy introduced which has taught men to abuse each other with the utmost politeness and express the most indecent ideas in the most modest language." Clodia was certainly not a model of virtue, but in the description by Cicero we must make certain deductions because of the political rancor by which the words were inspired; and, in the contrasted accounts by Catullus, remember that the faithful Lesbia of Catullus was the faithless Clodia of Metellus, and that the change in Lesbia was merely one of attitude toward Catullus rather than toward the requirements of the moral law. But as the friend of the leaders of the social and political world, wealthy and entertaining, he entered on his career of poesy at an early age, and in this he maintained, whatever may have been his fleshly clogs, that vivacity of spirit which has won for him the fitting psychic designation of "the Young Catullus."

His poems number one hundred and sixteen, arbitrarily arranged, and contain something more than two thousand lines. With much that is elevating, there are also parts unfit to be read. His political poems are no better than other political diatribes of the day. However, poems such as these are but few, and merely indicate that a high tide of political immorality had swept in at Rome, and with it had come in strange creatures from the "vasty deep."

Of the love poetry of Catullus, Sellar has said: "Other tales of love told by poets have been more beautiful in their course or more pathetic in their issue; none have been told with a more touching realism or a more desperate intensity of feeling." It is the deep impression of realism that they give which makes it sure that they are a part of all the poet had been. The poetical love stories of most of the Roman poets are of a dif-

ferent kind. In this respect Catullus is strongly contrasted with the one of whom we know the most, Horace. That the latter, with "no sorrow in his song, no winter in his years," gives us his real experiences may well be doubted. His poems on love themes are metrical essays in love expressions; and perhaps when his friends were enjoying themselves over their cups of different kinds of wine, Horace may have added his part to the feast by the presentation of varying phases of love in the different meters at his command. The expressional features entertain, but the loves of Horace are merely shadows, and there is no regret when they have floated by. But Catullus gives to us the bloom and blight of his love, and his words must reveal to us his actual experiences, or else he had that intensity of imagination which could furnish ideally the content of an actual experience, and whatever we deny to his experiences so much must we add to his imaginative powers. But of the reality of his reported experiences all are agreed: it is Lesbia alone of women whom he loves; it is Lesbia alone whom he hates. The possibilities of imaginative treatment might have been better subserved by changing subjects as did Horace; but the limitation to one and the presentation of the brightness, as well as of the gloom, prove conclusively that his is the record of what had actually been felt.

Winning, when still young, the favors of the wife of one of the proudest of the aristocrats at Rome, she seems to have completely taken possession of his thought. Whether it is in the lines,

Lesbia, let us live, and let us love;

whether it is in the voluptuous counsel to blot out each thousand kisses with a thousand more; whether it is when he mourns for Lesbia under the guise of mourning for Lesbia's sparrow dead, she seems to have been all in all to Catullus. But what he saw in Lesbia, and what he felt was in her love for him, was of his own creation, for it was the radiance of his own personality which he saw reflected from her, and he imagined that the brightness was her own. There must have been something remarkable in the Veronese, almost a stranger at Rome, which

won for him the notice of Clodia. He could not say, as did his antitype of Verona :

O how this spring of love resembleth
The uncertain glory of an April day ;

O Heaven ! were man
But constant, he were perfect : that one error
Fills him with faults ; makes him run through all sins ;
Inconstancy falls off ere it begins.

Completely absorbed by his love for Lesbia, he at first had no thought of the failure of Lesbia's devotion to himself. But her attitude toward him seems to have been dominated by political considerations and social craft, and not by genuine affection. Catullus, the most brilliant poet of Rome, and Cælius, one of the wittiest of orators, were in turn the recipients of her favors, and to Lesbia there must have been some social prestige in this fact. This, however, must be considered as subordinate to political exigencies, for she put them both aside when the two parties began to prepare for their final contest. She enjoyed the rivals, used them while she could, and then flung them aside. For this she reaped her reward with the supremacy of her party ; but the voices of her friends were hushed at their death, while through the ages have survived the words of obloquy and scorn from Cicero and from Catullus.

In every poet we look for instances of sustained power, for into the final decision of the worth of the poet must enter a consideration not only of quality but of the quantity as well. The quality decides the intensity of the poetic spirit and insight ; the quantity, the persistence of the qualitative elements. The finely chiseled work of Gray establishes his reputation from the qualitative standpoint. No one will ever again express so well the thought that was akin to his. Yet his was but a limited view of man, and made no approach to a complete representative system. Life is touched at but few points, and indications of poetic persistence are lacking. Quantity having quality must be the test, for neither by itself is enough. Some have written a few poems of a very high quality ; while others, by attempting too much, are deficient in quality. Not

recognizing their own limitations, they have tried a long, laborious flight, unbroken in its heaviness, excepting for here and there a sudden, swift turn showing what they might have done in a short flight. Catullus was not of this class, for five poems contain about half of all he wrote. The longest, of four hundred and eight lines, is an *epidyllion* or heroic idyl on the marriage of Peleus and Thetis. The longest and one of the latest of the works of Catullus, a more careful study of it is needed to show his poetic equipment at the close of his career.

The poem may be based on some Alexandrine model, but we do not have the original, and cannot tell to what extent Catullus was under obligations to the Greek. Was it only for the outlines of the story, or was the substance likewise borrowed? We cannot tell, and the originality of Catullus in the poem must remain an unsolved question. It is a thoughtful, evidently a matured work; but we cannot tell whether it is a translation or merely an adaptation such as Chaucer made of the "*Decameron*," or Shakespeare of the annals of Saxo Grammaticus. We assume that it is the latter, for there is no Alexandrine poem extant which shows imaginative powers such as this.

The theme of the poem is the marriage of the parents of Achilles—the mortal Peleus and the sea goddess Thetis. When Prometheus (foresight), chained on Mount Caucasus, was writhing under the tortures of force and violence, he rejoiced that he was the possessor of a secret on which depended the fate of Jove himself. This secret was that Thetis, beloved of Jove, was destined to become the mother of a son stronger than his father. When the secret was divulged, Thetis was given in marriage to the Thessalian king, that the power of Jove might not be destroyed. It was a story in some way foreshadowing the triumph of higher law in the affairs of the universe. As told by Catullus, only one portion is given, and that is not altogether a success as a narrative. The story is rather a mosaic—the grouping of beautiful parts around the story of the marriage. With the exception of one or two places where the narrative drags or the imagery is over-elaborated, the poem is masterly in design and in treatment.

It begins with the story of the voyage of the Argonauts in quest of the Golden Fleece. Their ship, divine and new, is, like that of the Ancient Mariner,

. . . the first that ever burst
Into that unknown sea.

When for the first time it cuts the waters

Out of the creaming surges in amaze
Wild faces rose on the strange sight to gaze—
The Nereids of the Deep.—*Martin.*

Then Peleus and Thetis see and love each other, and the betrothal follows in accordance with the wish of Jove. When the wedding day has dawned, the Thessalians gather at the palace of the king with their gifts, and are filled with admiration for the royal abode, but most of all for the embroidered covering of the marriage couch, representing Ariadne on the breaker-sounding shore at Naxos gazing at the fleet of Theseus vanishing over the waters. The mention of the name of Theseus calls the poet to an account of the expedition against the Minotaur in Crete and the love of Ariadne for the hero. The lament of Ariadne follows with her invocation of the wrath of the gods upon her faithless lover, fulfilled by the death of his father at the sight of his returning ships. At this point the gloom is relieved by the coming of Bacchus and his band of revelers engaged in the celebration of the mysteries. One-third only of the poem remains to tell of the passing of the mortals and the coming of the demigods: Chiron with the world's wealth of flowers for garlands; Peneus with the tallest of trees as a shade for the home; Prometheus, inscrutable, bearing only the fading marks of the adamantine chains. Thither, too, come all the gods, save only Apollo and Diana, who disdain to celebrate the festal day of Thetis. When all are feasting, the Fates sing the true epithalamium arranged in twelve equal strophes, each closing with the line

Currite ducentes subtegmina, currite, fusi

(run spindles, run, weaving the threads of doom), the poem closing by drawing a contrast between the present and the good old times when the gods appeared upon the earth.

About five-eighths of the poem is given up to the account of the tapestry and to the conclusion, so that the main theme is in reality subordinated to the accessory adornments of which the episode of Ariadne forms the chief part. To say nothing of the direct imitations in later poets, it may be compared with the account given by Vergil in the fourth book of the "Æneid" of Dido's grief and despair at the flight of Æneas. Both may have been following a common source, but it is more likely that Vergil's description is modeled after that of Catullus. More than one brilliant touch of Catullus is to be found in Vergil, yet the representation of Ariadne as the motionless, emotion-absorbed Bacchante (v., 61), and the figure of the incense of prayer were beyond the reach of Vergil. The superior skill of Catullus is equally well shown in the use of individual words. The breaker-resounding shore (*fluentis onore litore*, v., 52), the exsternated Ariadne (*exsternavit*, v., 71; *exsternata*, v., 165)—to transfer to English the new word of Catullus instead of consternated—the thorny cares (*spinosas curas*, v., 72), the labyrinthic turnings (*labyrintheis e flexibus*, v., 114), doth yearn to win (*praegestit apisci*, v., 145) are instances of highly wrought combinations or formations found only here and there or not at all among his successors. In this, as in others of his poems, the tone color is effected by bold strokes in the use of words which, found chiefly in Catullus, are formed entirely in harmony with the freer use of compounds in the earlier Latin, indicating a power of word combination which for some unknown reason was limited in the classical period.

The account of the adventures of Bacchus (254-263) is somewhat like Lucretius II., 618 ff. The two writers say practically the same thing, yet differently, and at the same time with a similarity in the difference. The passage in Catullus is:

Plangebant aliae proceris tympana palmis
Aut tereti tenues tinnitus aere ciebant,
Multis raucisonos efflabant cornua bombos
Barbaraque horribili stridebat tibia cantu.

Lucretius has:

Tympana tenta tonant palmis cymbala circum
Concava raucisono minantur cornua cantu
Et Phrygio stimulat numero cava tibia mentes.

("Others with extended palms intoned the tambours, or from brightened bronze brought tender tinklings; for many the horns blared rough-sounding blasts, and barbarian pipe shrilled with fearsome song." And "Tense tambours thunder, struck with palms, and concave circling cymbals and horns harass with rough-sounding song, and hollow pipe with Phrygian strains stimulates their minds.")

Both descriptions are alliterative, though there seems to have been a studied attempt of one to avoid sameness in words, and yet maintain sameness in alliteration. Which is the original account? In a letter written in the early part of the year 54 B.C., Cicero speaks of the work of Lucretius as if it had been recently published. If this poem is one of the last by Catullus, it must have been published about the same time. If Catullus died in 57 B.C., Lucretius is the imitator, if imitation there be; if he died in 54 B.C., and imitated Lucretius, then we must crowd into the year 54 the publication of the work of Lucretius, its reading by Catullus, the composition of the imitative portion, and his own death. Munro, *ad Lucr.* III. 57, cites nearly a score of passages in the episode which resemble passages in Lucretius, and maintains that Catullus came to his work fresh from a reading of Lucretius, and put into his own work some of the gleanings from Lucretius. But there are a few apparently Lucretian touches in the "Attis" also, whose date of publication may be assumed to be a little later than his return from Phrygia in 56 B.C., preceding the publication of the work of Lucretius. Be this as it may, the account of the great earth mother in the "Attis" did not affect, nor was it affected by, the account of Lucretius. Entirely in the dark as to the exact date of the composition of the Ariadne episode, each in his own mind may settle for himself the relative probability of the concentration of the statement of Catullus by Lucretius or the diffusion of the statement of Lucretius by Catullus. But did either imitate? Both were men of genius,

capable of dealing independently with the picture. Alliteration is a feature of early Latin poetry so common as not to be a safe guide in settling questions of authorship. We would hold to the originality of both, bearing in mind the final conclusion in the great discussion over the invention of calculus: "It has long been agreed on, by all mathematicians who have examined into the controversy, that Newton and Leibnitz are both justly entitled to be considered as independent discoverers of the calculus." We might, however, assert, a pure assumption, that sometime, somewhere there had been a personal association of the two men when their talk had been of the great earth mother. And perhaps it might not be an altogether wasted work of the imagination to reconstruct from kindred traces in their poetry something of their previous conversations in the home of Memmius and of the social environments which had brought together two so strongly contrasted men.

The "Attis" is a presentation of the experiences of Attis, an unmanned priest of Cybele. A youth with all the exuberance of a Greek, from a worshiper he changes to a priest, and awakes with a sad longing for the joyous life that had passed by. It is a weird myth of which Catullus may have heard when he was with Memmius in the East in 57 B.C. It may have been Greek in its origin, but as presented to us it is Oriental, and in spirit unlike anything that is Greek. It gives a vivid picture of all-absorbing fanaticism and of hopeless desolation. It is untranslatable into English, perhaps inexpressible, though by a shifting of the gender of the adjectives Catullus comes nearer expressing, than can we directly, the feelings of the unsexed Attis. As Sellar says, "The 'Attis' is the most original of all his poems. As a work of pure imagination, it is the most remarkable poetic creation in the Latin language." It is a vivid imaginative picture with the coloring intensified by intensest language, and the turbulence of the thought of "Attis" is heightened by a turbulence in the words themselves. In word-picturing it is among the best of the works of Catullus. To illustrate this by a single passage, let us take lines 39-41:

Sed ubi oris aurei Sol radiantibus oculis
 Lustravit aethera album, sola dura, mare ferum
 Populit noctis umbras vegetis sonipedibus.

(But when the Sun of golden face, with "ray-darting" eyes, surveyed the ether bright, solid lands, fierce sea, with fresh foot-sounding steeds he smote the shadows of the night.) The poem is alliterative throughout, as is the passage quoted above from the Peleus and Thetis, and perhaps as an aid in working out the Gallianbic meter, free use is made of strange compounds which are rarely used or found in Catullus alone: ivy-garlanded (*hederigerae*, v., 23), haste-footed (*properipidem*, v., 34), master-fleeing (*erifugae*, 51), and especially line 72:

Ubi cerva siluicultrix, ubi aper nemorivagus.

(Where the woodland-haunting hind, where the forest-roaming boar.)

Whatever may have been the practical attitude of Catullus to the sanctity of an unsanctified home as illustrated by his association with Lesbia, the poems dealing with marriage are among his best. Two (61 and 62) have been called epithalamia; but one is rather a monode, and the other does not seem to have reference to any particular marriage, so that the song in the marriage of Peleus and Thetis may be taken as the only true epithalamium of Catullus, one of the great ones in literature, such as is the "Epithalamium" of Spenser, and one in the fourth book of "Paradise Lost," if the hymn there be taken as an epithalamium. The central thought in the song of the fates is the future glory of Achilles. The poet's song (61) is throughout expressive of the deepest reverence and purest joy in the happiness of his friend Manlius Torquatus at his marriage with Vinia Aurunculeia. Except for a single trace of adherescent conventionality, it maintains its high tone unbroken, a monument to the moral sincerity of Catullus. The same is true of the following poem, in which each strophe of the song of the youths and maidens closes with the refrain:

Hymen, O Hymenæe; Hymen ades, O Hymenæe.

(Hymen, O Hymenæus; be present, Hymen, O Hymenæus.)

In the development of these poems, perhaps the most notice-

able feature is the use made of the comparisons introducing the most fragrant and beautiful of flowers to represent the loveliness of the bride. We must, however, be on our guard against reading too much into these poems as an expression of the sentiment of Catullus in regard to marriage. His praises are for abiding love finding expression in marriage, rather than for marriage itself. This finds expression in the "Acme and Septimius," a passionate vow of loving to which the love god gave his approbation. The general characteristics of all are the same—high appreciation of moral purity in man and of beauty in nature. The latter, however, is incidental to the delineation of the former, and finds much better expression in other poems.

Sweet Sirmio, thou the very eye
Of all peninsulas and isles
Which in our lakes of silver lie,
Or sleep enwreathed in Neptune's smiles.

Such is the beginning of Moore's translation of the most perfect of the poems of Catullus. In this there is a feeling of joyousness not to be found in many poems in Latin. It is not a cold, conventional discussion of the beauty of his home as he sees it on his return from the East, but is indicative of the freest enjoyment of rest and of love as he invokes his lovely Sirmio, the merry waves of lake, and smiles of home to bid him welcome. It is as care-free as is "Drifting," and, after all the attempts at translation, none has as yet caught and fixed in immutable language the evanescent forms of gladness which pervade the entire poem. Professor Tyrrell ("Latin Poetry," p. 110) thinks that the translation has never been made with anything like success, and gives, with too much English coloring, the following as a translation of the first three lines:

Rejoice, bright Sirmio, in thy master's joy,
And you, ye wavelets, merrymen of the mere,
Smile all the smiles ye have to greet me home.

Like the terms in the description of the fountain of Bandusia by Horace, those occurring in Catullus have their own life history, and cannot be exactly expressed by words having a different history. To Catullus and to his Roman readers *venusta Sirmio* must have been far more than "bright Sirmio,"

for crudely expressed in English it is *Venus Sirmio*, and at the time of the publication of *Sirmio*, Lucretius had no doubt already formulated the magnificent opening of the *De Rerum Natura*, in which Venus is represented as the all-pervasive power of light and life as well. We may assert that somewhat of this meaning was present to the thought of Catullus, for in the hymn to Diana he has given us a generalized view of the power of the goddess. But with the passing of the worship of the goddess passed also the appreciation of the coloring in *venusta*.

Catullus gives in this hymn, as he does nowhere else, a sympathetic view of the religious and national feelings of the Romans. It is not directly personal nor yet completely imaginative, but holds an intermediate position between the two classes. Munro says that it is one of the "‘cunningest patterns’ of excellence, such as Latium never saw before nor after; Alcæus, Sappho, and the rest then and only then having met their match." To show more fully the thought and metrical movement of the poem we give the translation of Professor Jebb:

Diana guardeth our estate,
Girls and boys immaculate;
Boys and maidens pure of stain,
Be Diana our refrain.

O Latonia, pledge of love,
Glorious to most glorious Jove,
Near the Delian olive tree
Latona gave thy life to thee,

That thou shouldst be forever queen
Of mountains and of forests green,
Of every deep glen's mystery,
Of all streams and their melody.

Women in travail ask their peace
From thee, our Lady of Release;
Thou art the Watcher of the Ways,
Thou art the moon with borrowed rays.

And thy full or waning tide
Marks how the monthly seasons glide;
Thou, Goddess, sendeth wealth of store
To bless the farmer's thrifty floor.

Whatever name delights thine ear,
By that name be thou hallowed here;
And as of old, be good to us,
The lineage of Romulus.

Most writers have not added much to the permanent structure of human thought nor to the permanently beautiful pictures in language. A few of the images of Catullus are perennial. In one of his invectives against Gellius (88) he speaks of a crime which neither Tethys nor Oceanus can wash away. This finds a parallel in Lucretius (6, 1077), was afterwards copied by Seneca, and gained an independent expression in Shakespeare, "Macbeth," II. ii. 60:

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand?

He speaks (II, 22) of his love which died as the meadow's flower after it was touched by the passing share, a simile appropriated by Vergil, and which in kindred form finds statement in the "Mountain Daisy" of Burns,

And now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies.

The rank we assign to the poetry of Catullus depends upon our own mental constitution and the consequent standard of judgment which we may set up. The critical prosperity of a poet is due to his harmony with ourselves and our ability to understand his moods. The prerequisite for the critic is sympathy, which is the foundation of all true insight. Insistence on morality for nineteen hundred years has put before the minds of men a higher standard of practical morality than that which the mass of Romans practiced in the days of Catullus. Religion had at that time practically vanished, and high morality seemed to demand no champion. There were lofty ideals to be expressed, but there was no turning in every direction to find expression for an irresistible moral impulse in the people's breast. It was on the eve of the appearance of Vergil and of Horace. But the first came with the traditions of past ages, and with all the fervor of a new imperialist transformed them for the exaltation of despotism. Horace was philosophical,

but it was the philosophy of a drifter on the moral sea. They each sang well, but each lacked the tone of deep moral earnestness, purified and exalted by the buoyancy of thought destined to transform and elevate the nation's life. In this respect Catullus was a sharer with them. His life, his love, his thought was of this life alone, and when death came to his beloved brother he bids him an everlasting farewell.

It is not the moral but the intense unmoral character of his poetry that has given him his high rank. Only once does he seem to recognize the corruption of his own age. In closing the "Peleus and Thetis" he reflects on the steep decline in virtue since the good old days. Of his own acts he did nothing extenuate, for of this he felt no need. Intense in setting forth his better self, he is equally intense in delineating the lower strata of thought, nor is there any indication that he felt there was a lower stratum. Intensity and reality are in all he says of an actual, not an ideal, life. There is no sense of oughtness in what he writes. He saw in present life, as it was actually presented to him, the complete sphere of the activities of men. Behind him was an outlived past, before him was no vision of a better age, so he looked at the present, at its men and its women, and wrote as they thought and spoke, and as a result in him there is found scarcely a trace of that all-absorbing seriousness of Lucretius, the herald of the reign of absolute law in a godless world.

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